

GAS TAX INCREASE

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, a lot of people think that the President has lost touch since he has flip-flopped so many times that maybe it has affected his head and his thinking. But it is not true. Bill Clinton still feels your pain.

In fact, Bill Clinton feels your gas pain. He even caused your gas pain, 4 cents a gallon, a 30-percent gas tax increase. That is about the price of a can of beans with every 10 gallons of gas, about a 40-cent difference.

So this summer, Mr. Speaker, what I say to middle-class Americans, when you are on vacation filling up your gas tank, spending that extra 40 cents, go ahead, buy the President a can of beans and send it to the White House. That way, not only will Bill Clinton feel your gas pain, but he can share in it as well.

THE BUDGET

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the previous speaker should also keep in mind the Dole dime that actually caused the taxpayers to lose more than a can of beans.

This morning I want to talk about the budget. Despite the headlines, this is in fact the same budget with the same flaws. Extreme deep cuts on the poor and the middle class to finance tax breaks for the wealthy.

What does this mean? It means that senior citizens and the poor are going to have a second class health care system. They are going to march up here in lockstep and try to tell us that we have to make these cuts to maintain the solvency of the Medicare system.

Please do not believe this hoax. The fact of the matter is, we do not need these deep cuts. The President's budget, other Democratic budgets give us the same level of solvency by the year 2006 as the Republicans do without making the deep cuts.

What do these cuts mean? They mean a loss of choice for seniors as to the doctors that they would go to. They mean that hospitals will close in rural areas because of deep cuts. And they mean children will go without health care.

As one of my colleagues said, it is basically the same old song.

MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, the President is pushing the minimum wage. As a business person who runs a business, I know that business has been

eating raw material cost increases for years. Unable to increase prices, business has been needing a reason to raise those prices. Along comes the minimum wage. Watch prices. Inflation can eat the value of a wage increase in nothing flat.

Who are we kidding? The minimum wage increase is straight politics.

GAS PRICES

(Mr. FAZIO of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, everybody knows that gas prices are rising, but if you think you have got trouble, you ought to look at what the people in California are facing: in Sacramento, \$1.54 a gallon; in San Jose, \$1.79; in Santa Barbara, \$2.19 a gallon. That is right. Here in the District of Columbia, it is only \$1.39 on average; nationally, \$1.27.

Clearly, we have a bigger problem in our very isolated gasoline market on the west coast. We have 10 percent of our refineries down and out of commission. We have the added costs of newly reformulated gasoline.

Sure, something needs to be done, and we can help by repealing the 4.3 cents gas tax increase, but what are we going to do to guarantee that that money actually finds its way into the pockets of consumers? That is \$30 billion the consumers need back.

Our Republican friends have shown no inclination or ability to make that happen. They simply are going to be feathering the nests of the major oil companies in this country.

ROLL BACK THE CLINTON GAS TAX

(Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, back in 1992, candidate Bill Clinton said, I oppose Federal excise gas tax increases. But in 1993, President Clinton enacted the largest tax increase in our Nation's history. And buried in that tax package was a \$4.8 billion increase in the gas tax.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are realizing the cruel effects of the Clinton gas tax right now. As Americans plan for the busiest travel season of the year, gas prices are soaring all over our Nation. The Clinton crunch is hitting our wallets hard.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are committed to rolling back the onerous Clinton gas tax. We want to reverse the tide of the Clinton crunch and not only help people earn more but help people keep more of what they earn.

The Clinton tax gas is a regressive tax that hurts all motorists, rich or poor. It is time to repeal the Clinton gas tax.

□ 1030

AT LEAST REPUBLICANS ARE CONSISTENT

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is *deja vu* all over again. Although it is early for summer reruns, the Republicans yesterday released their budget, which is a rehash of the document that the American public resoundingly defeated and rejected in 1995. It has the same identical budget priorities, drastically cuts the amount of money spent on health care for seniors, a \$168 billion cut in Medicare, the potential for hospitals to close across this country.

The Republicans cut Medicare once again, and they propose tax benefits for the wealthy. The money that they propose to cut does not go into the Medicare trust fund, but it goes to pay for the tax increases; the prescription that caused the outcry last year, that caused them to retreat from this issue. But you have to admire their consistency; they are back here again with the same priorities, and that is because their budget is the consequence of their values, of their priorities, and their willingness to do harm to the American people, and they are sincere in wanting to do harm to working men and women in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want a government that is on its side, not the side of special interests.

HOUSING AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE CONSULTED

(Mr. GEKAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, fairly shortly now we will be resuming the debate on the housing bill that is before the Congress, and one element of that requires our attention. Whether or not the Brooke amendment of the past will obtain for the future depends on what we do here today.

There is a resource that we have back at home that we ought to take advantage of in making up our minds as to how to finally vote on this measure, and that is the members of the authorities, the housing authorities, that have the responsibility and the initiative to deal with these problems on an everyday basis. They have to consider the tenants, the low-income status of those tenants, the problems of drug dealers on the premises, the costs of overhead, a thousand different problems that we do not consider when we vote on the larger questions that are involved. I believe that we ought to call our authorities' people and find out how they think on these matters.

DO NOT CUT MEDICARE

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House